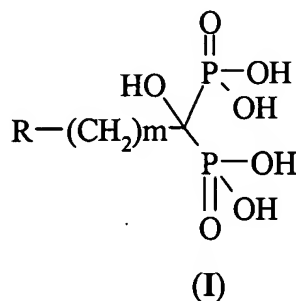


## LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

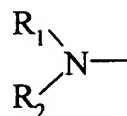
1. (Original) A process for the preparation of diphosphonic acids of the general formula (I)



wherein

m is an integer from 1 to 8 and

R is a residue of formula

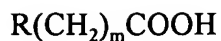


wherein  $\text{R}_1$  and  $\text{R}_2$  are independently selected from hydrogen or

$\text{C}_1$ - $\text{C}_3$ alkyl, or

R is a 5- or 6 membered aromatic ring, optionally containing one or more heteroatoms selected from N, O, S,

by reaction of a carboxylic acid of the general formula (II)



(II)

wherein R and m are as defined above,

with a mixture of phosphorous acid and phosphorus oxychloride, in the absence of solvents and with a carboxylic acid: phosphorus oxychloride: phosphorous acid molar ratio of 1:2-4:8-12.

2. (Original) The process according to claim 1 wherein the carboxylic acid:phosphorus oxychloride: phosphorous acid molar ratio is 1:3:10.

3. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~ for the preparation of diphosphonic acids wherein R is imidazolyl or pyridyl.

4. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ for the preparation of a diphosphonic acid selected from[[:]] ibandronic, risedronic and zoledronic acid.

5. (Original) Ibandronic acid monosodium salt in the amorphous form.

6. (Currently Amended) A salt ~~Salt~~ according to claim 1 with a water content lower than 2% by weight.

7. (Currently Amended) Pharmaceutical compositions containing the salt of claim 5 ~~claims 5 or 6~~ in admixture with at least one suitable excipient ~~excipients~~.

8. (Currently Amended) The process ~~Process~~ for the preparation of the salt of claim 5 ~~claims 5 or 6~~ comprising the salification of ibandronic acid with sodium hydroxide, carbonate

or bicarbonate in an aqueous solution, followed by lyophilization or “spray-drying” of the resulting aqueous solution.

Please add the following new claims:

9. (New) The process according to claim 2 for the preparation of diphosphonic acids wherein R is imidazolyl or pyridyl.
10. (New) The process according to claim 2 for the preparation of a diphosphonic acid selected from ibandronic, risedronic and zoledronic acid.
11. (New) The process according to claim 3 for the preparation of a diphosphonic acid selected from ibandronic, risedronic and zoledronic acid.
12. (New) Pharmaceutical compositions containing the salt of claim 6 in admixture with at least one suitable excipient.
13. (New) The process for the preparation of the salt of claim 6 comprising the salification of ibandronic acid with sodium hydroxide, carbonate or bicarbonate in an aqueous solution, followed by lyophilization or “spray-drying” of the resulting aqueous solution.